REMARKS

Claims 1 - 16 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 12, 13 and 14 have been amended and new claim 17 has been added. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated August 26, 2004.

35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph Rejection:

Claims 1 and 12-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The limitation "the user" in the claims 1 and 12-14 corresponds to the limitation "a remote user" in the preambles thereof. The limitation "the sent logical address" corresponds to the limitation "a logical address" in the description of "an address holder which holds a logical address allotted when the connection is established" in claim 1 or similar part in each of the claims 12-14.

The applicant has amended claims 1 and 12-14 by replacing the limitation "the user" with "the remote user" and the limitation "the sent logical address" with "the allotted logical address".

Accordingly, the claims of the present application are not indefinite and the present application should not be rejected under 35 USC §112. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As to the Merits:

As to the merits of this case, the Examiner sets forth the following rejection:

claims 1 – 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,580,950) in view of Feder et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,512,754).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Johnson discloses a home communication system characterized in the following points.

(i) The user merely sends an instruction to the data center 20 and can not directly access the control unit 30 set in the home. (Refer, for example, to col. 4, lines 30-33.)

(ii) The user can not give his/her instruction directly to the control devices 40 in the home in real time. Such commands are downloaded from the data center 20 to the control unit 30, for example, upon scheduled intervals and transmitted to the control devices. Also, the information of the control devices is periodically uploaded in the data center 20 and accordingly the user can not refer thereto in real time.

In order to realize real time processing in the system disclosed by Johnson, it is necessary for the data center 20 and the control unit 30 to be constantly connected to the network. (Refer, for example, to col. 5 1-27, Figs. 10 and 11.)

(iii) If the user tries to give a command to the control unit 30 when the control unit 30 is not connected to the network, the user merely receives a message indicating that the control unit 30 is not connected to the network. (Refer, for example, to col. 7 lines 60-65 and Fig. 7)

Feder, in col. 9 lines 47 - col. 10, line 3, discloses a technique for allotting IP addresses based on the normal IPCP.

On the other hand, in the claims 1 and 12-14 of the present application, as amended, it is clearly specified that the information processing apparatus (e.g. home server) connects to the network (e.g. Internet) based on the operation of the connection request unit and the address allotted thereto is notified to the network node of the user. The user node can access the information processing apparatus utilizing the notified address and give the instruction to the home network devices.

According to this configuration, the present invention, for example, can realize the following significant effects.

(i) The information processing apparatus is not connected to the network until the request to establish the connection is made by the connection request. Thereby, communication fees can be greatly saved in comparison with the constant connection.

(ii) After the information processing apparatus is connected to the network, the address allotted thereto is reported to the user node. Thereby, the user can directly

access the information processing apparatus via the network and can make real time instructions for the home network devices connected to the information processing apparatus.

This significant effect that the direct access from the user to information processing apparatus in real time can be realized without constantly connecting the information processing apparatus to the network can never be realized based on what is disclosed by Johnson, since according to the system taught by Johnson the control unit 30 and the data center 20 should inevitably be connected to the network in order to realize real time access from the user, as described above. Moreover, in Johnson, there is no disclosure concerning the idea of informing the address of the data center 20 or the control unit 30 to the user.

Even though the address allotting method taught by Feder is combined with what is disclosed by Johnson, the effect of the present invention still can not be realized.

Moreover, in the present invention, the address is allotted to the information processing apparatus randomly each time it connects to the network. A third person hardly knows such address while the user node is notified the address and thereby can surely communicate with the information processing apparatus. That is, according to the present invention, user security and the communication reliability can both be enhanced.

On the other hand, such another significant effect of the present invention can never be realized based on the disclosure by Johnson and Feder. That is, because the method for

informing the user of the address of the data center 20 or the control unit 30 is not disclosed in Johnson as well as in Feder.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 1 and 12-14 under U.S.C. 103 based on Johnson and Feder is improper, and therefore must be withdrawn. Also, the rejection of the claims 2 – 11 dependent thereon should be withdrawn as well.

Hereunder, the differences between the present claimed invention and other documents cited by the examiner in the Office Action will be described.

US 6,288,716 B1 (Humpleman) discloses a technique based on HTML, HTTP, IP or the like for controlling devices connected to the network in a unified manner.

US 6,615,088 B1 (Myer) discloses a technique for controlling devices connected to a control network through browsers via a control network portal between the control network and the Internet.

US 6,161,133 A (Kikinis) discloses a system for obtaining setting information of the appliances connected to the internet automatically from a server and for configuring setting thereof.

US 6,405,103 B1 (Ryan) discloses a method for converting control program of building control system.

However, these cited references fail to disclose the idea of connecting the information processing apparatus to the network which is originally not connected thereto. There is neither a description of notifying the address allotted for the information processing apparatus to the user. Therefore, even those skilled in the art can never make the present invention from the cited references.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date. If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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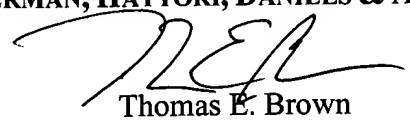

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